REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6 are pending in this application, with claim 1 being the only independent claim. Independent claim 1 has been amended. Support for the amendment to independent claim 1 may be found, for example, at pg. 1, line 37 to pg. 2, line 3 of the specification as originally filed. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, in view of the following amendment and remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,941,730 ("*Uchiyama*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,478,613 *Zoell*. For the following reasons, reconsideration of this rejection is requested.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite, *inter alia*, "the plug being extrusion-coated with plastic and the sealing lip being produced simultaneously with the plastic extrusion-coating of the plug". The combination of the cited art fails to teach or suggest a plug which is configured in the foregoing manner.

The Examiner has acknowledged that *Uchiyama* fails to teach or suggest "a plug that is extrusion coated with plastic", as recited in independent claim 1, and cites *Zoell* for this feature. Applicants, however, respectfully contend that the combination of *Uchiyama* and *Zoell* fails to achieve the fuel pump of independent claim 1.

Uchiyama discloses a connector installation structure for a fuel tank. According to *Uchiyama*, "a holding sleeve for receiving a connector for the fuel tank is fixed through a cover plate adapted to be mounted on a wall of the fuel tank and the connector can be prevented from coming out of the cover plate by elastically fitting a clip on the connector so as to engage with the holding sleeve" (see col. 1, lines 50-57).

Uchiyama (col. 1, lines 57-64) further explains that "[t]he connector comprises: a plug body adapted to be fitted in the holding sleeve; an inner connection portion having a smaller

diameter than the plug body and adapted to be contained in the fuel tank; and an outer connection portion projecting outwardly from the fuel tank. Consequently, the clip is elastically fitted to an outer periphery of the inner connection portion so as to engage with the holding sleeve".

Uchimaya thus teaches a structure in which the two components, i.e., the plug (1) and receptacle (24) that receives the plug, are initially separate from each other before being assembled together as a complete unit. That is, an upwardly flared inlet (27) is provided on the lid plate, and the flared inlet is located separately of the plug (1). Even if the flared inlet (27) is considered to be a sealing lip, *Uchiyama* still fails to teach or suggest that the circumferential sealing lip is integrally formed in the plug and is produced simultaneously with the plastic extrusion-coating of the plug, as recited in now amended independent claim 1. FIG. 1 of *Uchiyama* clearly shows that the upwardly flared inlet 27 is not integrally formed in the plug but, rather, the flared inlet is located separately from the plug before the two components are assembled together as a complete unit.

Accordingly, *Uchiyama* fails to teach or suggest "the plug having electrical contacts for connecting an electric motor of the fuel pump to a mains supply and an integrally formed, circumferential sealing lip which includes a region that is oriented toward the electrical contacts and which seals the plug against the receiving device when fuel is conveyed through the fuel pump, the plug being extrusion-coated with plastic and the sealing lip being produced simultaneously with the plastic extrusion-coating of the plug", as expressly recited subject matter of independent claim 1.

Zoell fails to teach what *Uchiyama* lacks. *Zoell* is directed to a connector for a fuel pump of a motor vehicle that is extrusion coated for protection from corrosion caused by fuel. *Zoell* (col. 3, lines, 26-28) explains that "the connector 1 is plugged onto the bearing plate 10, after

assembly". *Zoell* (col. 3, line 30 to col. 4, line 4) additionally explains that "[t]he carbon brushes 5 are mounted, such that they can move, in the receptacles 11 in the bearing plate 10, in such a manner that they can move downward in the event of wear resulting from the electric motor, which is not illustrated but is arranged under the bearing plate 10". *Zoell* fails to disclose a circumferential sealing lip as recited in independent claim 1.

Since *Uchiyama* teaches that a flared inlet is separate from the plug and *Zoell* fails to teach or suggest any circumferential sealing lip, the combination of *Zoell* and *Uchiyama* fails to teach or suggest at least "the plug being extrusion-coated with plastic and the sealing lip being produced simultaneously with the plastic extrusion-coating of the plug", as now recited in amended independent claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, independent claim 1 is patentable over the combination of *Uchiyama* and *Zoell*. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are therefore in order, and a notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

In view of the patentability of independent claim 1, dependent claims 2, 4 and 6 are also patentable over the prior art for the reasons set forth above, as well as for the additional recitations contained therein.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is in condition for allowance. Early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, suggestions, or objections, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned in order to facilitate reaching a resolution of any outstanding issues.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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